HARAMBEE FLAME

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Results Of Recent H.A.C.O. Elections; From Other Sources: Jailing Of African Men In U.S., Professor Sues For Tenure, Police Violence Against Aborigines, Update on Burkina Faso, Zambian Economic Measures, Libya Decentralizing; Editorials: Isaiah Thomas Controversy, Multi-Culture Education in Omaha Schools; Announcements; etc.

New H.A.C.O. Board Takes Office

At the Tuesday, May 5 meeting of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, the annual election to fill the offices of chairman and sergeant-at-arms was held. Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa(aka David Rice) was voted in as chairman, and Al "Pete" Wilson was voted in as sergeant-at-arms. The membership approved the appointed (by the newly elected chairman and sergeant-at-arms) officers of the central committee on the meeting of June 2. In an effort to bring about an atmosphere reflective of the African identity of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization members, the new central committee is instituting some changes. The first two to have been implemented are: the use of Yoruba(language) terms to refer to the positions on the central committee and the addition of two non-central committee positions of honor to facilitate a libation ceremony with which each meeting will begin.

The members of the new H.A.C.O. central committee are:

Member	Position
Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa (aka David Rice)	Alaga(Chairman)
Al Wilson	Eso/Alakoso Asha(Sgt.-at-arms)
McKinley Godbolt	Olotu Eko(Education chairman)
Robert Gardner	Eleto(Administrative chairman)
Larry Scott	Akowe(Secretary)
Lee McNichols	Akapo(Treasurer)
Lawrence Atwater	Akewi(Librarian)
Bobby Joe Jackson	*Olopon-ile(Earth-bearer)
Hanee Shaib(aka Robert Toney)	*Olomi(Water-carrier)

*non-central committee position

-More on page 2

English translation of Yoruba terms:

Position	Meaning
Alaga	Owner of the chair
Eso/Alakoso Asha	*Palace guard/The authority in charge of the ways of a people
Olotu Eko	Chief of knowledge or learning
Eleto	Person in charge of procedures
Akowe	Writer of documents
Akapo	Person who carries the bags of money
Akewi	Court historian
Olopon-ile	**Carrier of a tray of earth
Olomi	Water-carrier

*The sergeant-at-arms in H.A.C.O., in addition to having the duties commonly associated with that position, is chairman of the cultural affairs committee.

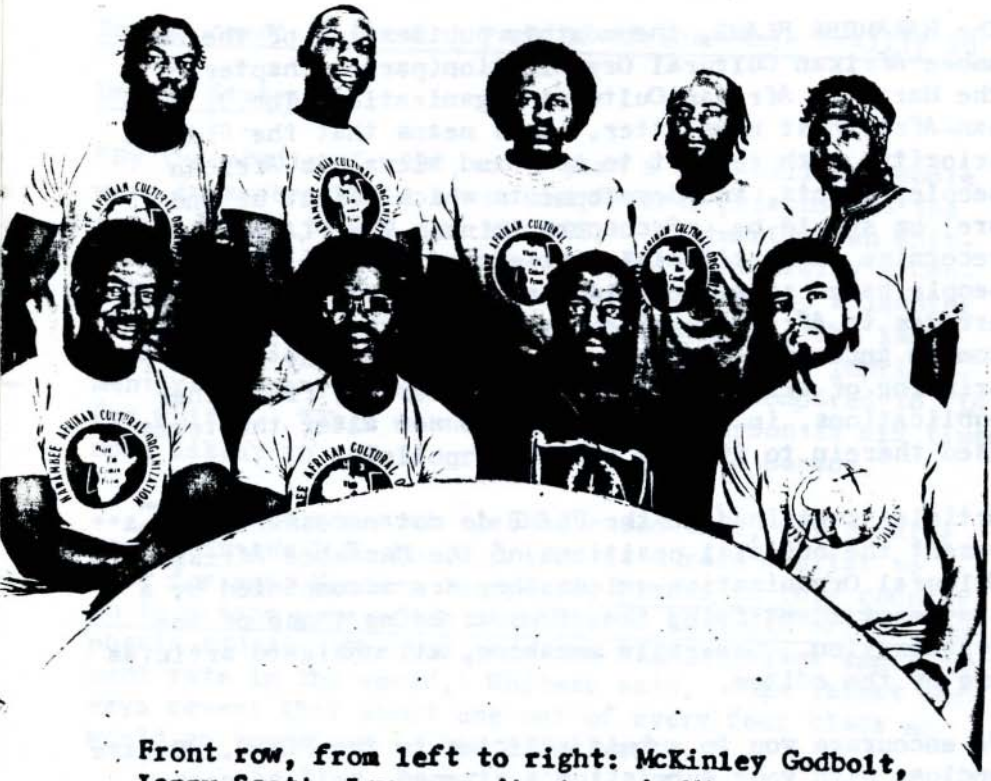
**Since our meetings are held inside, we bring a portion of earth upon which to pour libation.

Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization Creed

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that black is beautiful in its own right, rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural exchange is germane to human growth.

Nguzo Saba(Seven Principles)

Umoja(Unity) Kujichagulia(Self-determination)
Ujima(Collective Work And Responsibility)
Ujamma(Cooperative Economics) Nia(Purpose)
Kuumba(Creativity) Imani(Faith)



Front row, from left to right: McKinley Godbolt, Larry Scott, Lawrence Atwater, Al Wilson

Back row: Bobby Joe Jackson, Lee McNichols, Robert Gardner, Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa, Hanee Shaib

FLAME Editorial Policy

The HARAMBEE FLAME, the monthly publication of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(parent chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, Inc.), is a pan-Africanist newsletter. This means that the FLAME's priority, with respect to news and views, is African people, events, and developments which affect us and are, or should be, of concern to us. The FLAME does not recognize any artificial distinction between African people based solely on place of birth. Therefore, references to African people are made on the basis of our common ancestry. An exception to this policy is the reprinting of articles, or excerpts thereof, from other publications, in which cases we do not alter the terms used therein to fit our editorial policy.

Articles contained in the FLAME do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization unless they are accompanied by a statement identifying the views as being those of the organization. Generally speaking, all unsigned articles are by the editor.

We encourage you to submit articles to the FLAME. Please enclose with your submission a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Articles should not exceed 900 words. Short stories are subject to the same restriction with respect to length. We also welcome poetry and graphics. Send your submissions to: HARAMBEE FLAME
Attn: Editor
Harambee Afrikan Cultural Org.
P.O. Box 2500
Lincoln, NE 68502-0500

To subscribe to the FLAME, send $6.00(money order or check) to: HARAMBEE FLAME
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Make money order or check payable to "Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization."

From Other Sources

Imprisonment: A Growing Part Of African Male Reality in U

United States

"By the middle of 1986, more than a half-million people were incarcerated in state and federal prisons and the ratio jumped to 219 per 100,000.' Whitman(Steven Whitman, a white lecturer at Northwestern University's Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research and a leading criminal justice analyst) said that in 1983, the last year for which racial data are available, the imprisonment rate was 719 per 100,000 for blacks compared to 114 for whites. 'This means that a black person is six times more likely to got to prison than a white person.'

..."Whitman's research also revealed that, while white people in the U.S. go to prison at a rate similar to that for most Western Europeans, blacks in this country go to prison more often than blacks in South Africa.(Emphasis added) 'The U.S. has the highest black imprisonment rate in the world,' Whitman said. 'The latest surveys reveal that about one out of every four black men would go to prison in his lifetime.'..."

-Above passages excerpted from "Prisons In The U.S.: A Growing Black Ghetto," which appears on page 2 of the June 10-23 edition of IN THESE TIMES.

Dube Battle Against S.U.N.Y. Continues

"South African professor Ernest Dube is suing the State University of New York(SUNY) here, seeking tenure and $600,000 in damages. Dube was denied tenure earlier this year after Gov. Mario Cuomo and others assailed him for teaching Zionism is a form of racism...

"Dube, a member of the African National Congress who spent four years in South African jails, taught in a 1983 course that Nazism, apartheid and Zionism are the 'three forms of racism.'...

"The American Association of University Professors has intervened to investigate the university's integrity in the case. But the union representing SUNY faculty, the United University Professions, has failed to take a stand."

-Above passages excerpted from "Anti-Zionist Professor Sues Over Tenure," which appears on page 4 of the June 10 edition of THE GUARDIAN.

Police Violence Against Aborigines

..."Since September 1983, some 21 young Aboriginal men have suffered violent deaths in police custody, including 12 in the past year alone...

"In most cases, those who have died have been the victims of brutal beatings at the hands of police and jailers. In all cases, however, these deaths have been officially declared the result of 'suicide,' 'natural causes,' or 'misadventure' -- often against a massive weight of evidence to the contrary...

"Anger in Aboriginal communities and among all supporters of Black rights is rising, as instanced by a meeting of more than a thousand people April 14 in Sydney Town Hall. The meeting was attended by large numbers of Aboriginal people from both Sydney and rural New South Wales...

"Helen Boyle, chairperson of the Committee to Defend Black Rights, drew out the story the statistics told... 'a chilling pattern is emerging.' Blacks are jailed at least 10 times more often than white Australians. 'Every Aboriginal person in John Pat(Died at the hands of police on Sept. 28, 1983, in Roeburne, in western Australia)'s town is arrested on average three times a year. This surely represents systematized repression and terror for our people.'..."

-Above passages excerpted from "Australian Aborigines Protest Racist Cop Attacks," which appears on page 15

of the June 5 edition of THE MILITANT.

Peasants Activated in Burkina Faso(in West Africa)

"From the earliest days of the Burkinabe revolution in August 1983, the government of President Thomas Sankara has stressed the importance of mobilizing the rural population, who make up the vast bulk of Burkina's nearly 9 million people. The goal has been to raise living standards in the countryside, as well as the level of agricultural production, an essential task in a country that has been plagued by periodic droughts and famines.

"Althought Burkina is one of the poorest countries in the world, hundreds of new rural schools, health clinics, marketplaces, and other facilities have been built over the past few years, many of them through the mobilized labor of villagers themselves...

"Agrarian reform in Burkina, Compaore(head of the Ministry of Peasant Affairs) pointed out, is different than in countries with significant capitalist agriculture. Burkina's peasants are engaged overwhelmingly in subsistence farming and no class of big landlords, capitalist or otherwise, ever emerged there...

"'Today,' Compaore continued, 'the appropration of the land should reside with the state, although, from the traditional point of view, the land belongs to the community. So there has not been any rural resettlement of peasants or redistribution of land. But each peasant is now assured of remaing where he is, if he has a real need to work(the land) for a living.'

"The nationalization of the land is thus intended to block the possibility of peasants losing their land through debt or private appropriation. At the same time, the government, rather than the traditional village chiefs, now has the power to determine how land is used..

"Various agricultural credit institutions already exist, Compaore said...Now peasants are being encouraged to set up their own cooperative credit facilities.

"Because of the high costs of imported, chemical fertilizers, peasants are being shown ways to produce and better use organic fertilizers..."

-Above passages excerpted from "Revolution Deepens In Burkina's Villages," which appears on page 9 of the June 12 edition of THE MILITANT.

Economic Measures Protested in Zambia

"Massive opposition to government economic policies forced Zambian President Kaunda to announce the dismantling of the IMF(International Monetary Fund)-imposed economic austerity plan. After recent strikes by public employees, the copper miners rejected the government's wage offer. In December 1986, 15 people were killed by government forces during rebellions sparked by a 125% hike in the price of corn meal. On May 1, the government re-established price controls of food and limited interest payments on the foreign debt."

-Above article(under the title of "Zambian Workers Force End to Austerity Plan") reprinted from page 10 of the June edition of LABOR'S CHAMPION.

Decentralization in Libya

"...Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi is pushing 'the decentralization of all political and economic institutions' in his country...Qaddafi recently moved his army headquarters to the Jufra oasis in the Sahara, where several ministries are also bound...'For Col. Qaddafi, ...decentralization is a new step toward the suppression of the bourgeois state.'..."

-Above passages excerpted from "THe Greening Of Libya," which appears on page 43 of the June edition of WORLD PRESS REVIEW.

Announcements

Upcoming H.A.C.O. Meetings

Tue. June 16	Sun. July 5	Sun. Aug. 2
Sun. June 21	Tue. July 14	Tue. Aug. 11
Tue. June 30	Sun. July 19	Sun. Aug. 16
	Tue. July 28	Tue. Aug. 25

The Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization meetings run from 6-8p.m. We encourage you Brothers here in the institution, as well as you Brothers and Sisters from the African communities in Omaha and Lincoln to attend our meetings. To contact us by mail, write to:

Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization
P.O. Box 2500
Lincoln, NE 68502-0500

To contact us by phone, call 471-3161(ext. 388, 380, or 379) between the hours of 12:30 and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. Simply ask for the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization sponsor.

ATTENTION, MOVE! THIS IS AMERICA by Margot Harry has recently been released by BANNER PRESS. This book addresses the police bombing of the MOVE house in Philadelphia and contains an appendix featuring contributions from Mumia Abu-Jamal, Carl Dix, Richie Havens, Florynce Kennedy, Chokwe Lumumba, C. Vernon Mason, Stanley Vaughan, Jitu Weusi, and Alice Walker. Order from:

Banner Press
P.O. Box 6469
Chicago, ILL 60680

The Nebraska Prisoners Art Guild will be holding its Summer Art Exhibit and Symposium on Sunday, August 23 from 5-8 p.m. at the Nebraska State Pen, 14th. & Pioneer Blvd. in Lincoln. Most works will be for sale. For additional information, write to N.S.P. Art Guild; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE; 68502-0500. Or call Kevin Lowry at 471-3161(ext. 379) between the hours of 12:30 and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Isaiah Thomas - Just Kidding

Recently, America was shocked to learn that an uppity African, a certain Isaiah Thomas, had sullied, or attempted to sully, the image and reputation of one of its greatest heroes--Larry Bird. Yes, this Isaiah had said that, while Larry Bird is an excellent, excellent player, were he black, he would just be another good player. When word of this got to the surface, the stuff(politely put) hit the fan. Caucasian sports reporters and commentators leaped upon Isaiah's butt as if he were a fire they were trying to put out. He was accused of being a spoil-sport(Detroit having lost its series against Boston), a black racist, and an assortment of other unsavory names.

Within a day or so of the release of this news bombshell, a press conference was held at which Isaiah told America that he had only been joking, that anyone who knows him knows that he likes to tease, etc. Also prominent at the press conference was none other than Larry Bird, who "let Isaiah off the hook" by stating that, if Isaiah told him he was only joking, that was good enough for him. After a couple of more days of publicity, the controversy faded. The uppity African had been made to take back his criticism of the press and its magnifying of basketball's Great White Hope, Larry Bird.

But we pull the controversy out of its grave to briefly examine a couple of issues of which it is comprised. First, what did Dennis Rodman(Isaiah's teammate) and Isaiah Thomas mean in saying that, were Larry Bird "black"(African), he would just be another good ball-player. It seems that that comment was an allusion to the amount of press Bird gets and the degree to which he is given a larger-than-life image by the press. Further, it would appear to be an expression of the belief that African players must truly be spectacular in order to receive the kind of press build-up that a Caucasian player like Larry Bird receives. . .

The fact is that there is an abundance of evidence to support an accusation of ethnocentric and/or racist bias in press coverage of N.B.A. players specifically and

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Back In Time

The Yoruba City of Abeokuta--Middle of 19th Century

"What I saw disabused my mind of many errors in regard to...Africa. The city extends along the bank of the Ogun for near six miles and has a population approximately 200,000...instead of being lazy, naked savages, living on the spontaneous productions of the earth, they were dressed and were industrious...(providing) everything that their physical comfort required. The men are builders, blacksmiths, iron-smelters, carpenters, calabash-carvers, weavers, basket-makers, traders, barbers, tanners, tailors, farmers, and workers in leather and morocco... they make razors, swords, knives, hoes, bill-hooks, axes, arrow-heads, stirrups...women...most diligently follow the pursuits which custom has allotted to them. They spin, weave, trade, cook, and dye cotton fabrics. They also make soap, dyes, palm oil, nut oil, all the native earthenware, and many other things used in the country."

-Commentary by an American missionary in the mid-1800s, reprinted from FLASH OF THE SPIRIT by Robert Farris Thompson. Above quoted passage appears on page 3.

16th. Century Timbuktu

"Writing for an Italian audience early in the sixteenth century, Leo Africanus described Timbuktu as a city of learning and letters where the king, besides disposing of an army of three thousand cavalry and 'countless infantry', supported from his treasury 'many magistrates, learned doctors and men of religion'. 'Here in Timbuktu,' he noted, 'there is a big market for manuscript books from the Berber countries, and more profit is made from the sale of books than from any other merchandise.'"

-Excerpted from page 63 of AFRICA IN HISTORY by Basil Davidson.

sports generally. For example, in describing the play of the best African players in the N.B.A., the press typically uses terms like "raw talent," "natural ability," and "instinct." Yet when speaking of the best Caucasian players, of whom Larry is certainly one, the press seems to prefer the use of "intelligence" and other terms that emphasize that these players have brains. No doubt it is true that Dominique Wilkins, Michael Jordan, Julius Erving of a few years ago, and other such high-fliers are players with instincts, talent, ability, etc. But they also have intelligence. Yet rarely are these or other less spectacular African ball-players given credit by the media for making use of intellect on the court. While the point can be made that African players of the type and caliber of Wilkins, Jordan, et al are so spectacular that their intelligence might be overlooked, one is forced to look at Maurice Cheeks of the Philadelphia Seventy-Sixers. Can a case be made for his being less intelligent on the court than, for instance, Larry Bird?

If we take an honest look at media coverage of the N.B.A., we must conclude that, for an African player to get the quantity of press that Bird gets, he has to be spectacular. Larry Bird is a very good player, an exceptional one. His statistics speak for themselves. But it is most probably the case, he not being a terribly exciting athlete, that, were he African, he would not be getting the kind and quality of press coverage that he receives in fact. What we have to understand, as Dennis Rodman and/or Isaiah Thomas do, is that the Caucasian-dominated press, seeing an N.B.A. that has practically been taken over by African players, has been clutching at straws in an effort to find Caucasians to hold up as models for Caucasian supremacy. What is deplorable about the Isaiah Thomas affair is not his statement about Bird(more accurately, media creation of the Larry Bird image) but his subsequent inability to stand up for the truth of what he'd said and the pathetic pose he struck as a cowed, super-penitent, but grinning African man seeking the forgiveness of Caucasian America and its media agents.

-Wopashitwe Mondo Byen we Langa(aka David Rice)/Editor

Omaha Public Schools' Subterfuge For Reality: Multi-Cultural Education

-Montsho Rakeletso

During the past five years, I, along with a coalition of other community folks, have addressed countless school board members regarding the many educational shortcomings in our school district. However, many of our concerns have been largely ignored because of the know-it-all mentality of staff and board members.

An examination of the content of many schools' curricula makes it apparent that students are facing a form of intellectual rigidity appropriate for a stone age. Moreover, the expectation shared by many people that schools help solve problems facing the society is generally an unfulfilled one because of the comatos state of the gate-keepers who pose as educators.

Pedagogy in O.P.S.(Omaha Public Schools) is nothing more than advanced pigeon-holing in which the mastery of robotic behavior forms the corner-stone of student "achievement." In addition, the "educational" environment is such that those students who are held in high esteem tend to be those who have a knack for fashion or flair. Young, oppressed African-Americans students yearn for emancipatory tools which can spell the difference between failure and success. But quality education is denied them. It is for these reasons that we felt it necessary for structural changes to be made in the school system.

Approximately four years ago, we approached district officials about the lack of multi-culture material being used in the classroom and the serious omissions in educating students about their respective cultures. School officials agreed with our basic contention and initiated a five-year "infusion" multi-culture program. Their master plan was to put the implementation of this program into the hands of all teachers within the district. We opposed to this because it would be difficult to monitor

and insure uniformity with there being such a large group of teachers, many of whom would be die-hard racists. We had proposed a separate multi-culture course which the district refused because allegedly felt there would be a public backlash. Therefore, we had to compromise and accept this "infusion model." Nevertheless, school administrators were cautioned by community members not to incorporate a propsal without the input and feedback of the local community. The district has a history of creating programs and projects in a vacuum; and, of course, when such projects and/or programs fail, it is the students who are left out on a limb.

O.P.S. formed a multi-culture committee, composed of the few community advocates who called for the change and the rest being hand-picked officials from the district and various apolitical personalities from the community with no prior history in progressive pedagogy. It appeared that those who had certified track records of looking the other way on community issues were selected to participate.

Essentially, after about a year of floundering and being called to meetings when district officials had something which needed rubber-stamping, the committee was disbanded after the Negro kingpin(chairman) resigned for a better position in another town. It appeared that he had only been interested in personal short-term goals rather than the long-term goals and interests of the community.

Meanwhile, the district had embarked upon this five-year plan, bringing in educators and carpet-bagger consultants who had no prior knowledge of our community. They were paid exorbitant fees for helping O.P.S. in its self-aggrandizing program. In practical terms, these scalawags served the function of public-relations agents for O.P.S., promoting the false notion of O.P.S. as a forward-thinking institution and its programs as being effective and progressive.

African-American, Chicano, and Native American students are still being brainwashed and miseducated on a grand scale in the district. This writer suggested a plethora

of textbooks, supplemental books which could help in the implementation of multi-culture education. However, the district was not to be out-done in appearing to move forward quickly - while, simultaneously, dragging its feet in reality. Officials set up a meeting during which this writer was informed by the Superintendent that the district was in the process of purchasing additional textbooks which would imbellish this multi-culture theme. Actually a fist-full of purchase orders, already filled out for the books, were put into the Superintendent's hands before the meeting and he waved them at me to illustrate his seriousness. However, subsequent events indicated that those purchase orders must have been filed away in the trash can, maybe even before I got to my car after the meeting.

Another avenue pursued by this writer to get multi-culture education into the schools was to get on the . . . school supplemental textbook committee. Needless to say, there were no people of color on this committee. I suspect that many of the African-American educators lacked the fortitude to lock horns with such a group which could be expected to share a racist ideology. Nevertheless, I took a seat among this group both brought color to it and attempted to bring substance. During my tenure on this committee, three to five books written by Africans were accepted for use by the district. However, the district was able to circumvent this process by not pushing educators to use the books, apparently because they were not compatible with the images put forth by HUCKLEBERRY FINN and other such books in such wide use in the district. I learned that the supplemental textbooks used are typically chosen on the basis of teachers' personal preferences.

During the next stage of multi-culture program development, there was a transformation of the committee. Because of bad publicity and widespread community discontentment with the multi-culture program, such a transformation was inevitable. Following a series of meetings with the district staff, it was decided that the community would select its persons for the committee and the district would appoint its folks. This was ac-

cepted because, in the past, the district would appoint both its staff(who would faithfully attend the meetings) and "yes" personalities from the community. During meetings it was not uncommon to see folks scratching their heads when it was apparent that there were no mosquitos in the room.

The process of trying to bring multi-culture education into the O.P.S. district has been a test of will and effort on the part of the community. It has been a proverbial chess game. When the community makes a good move, the district makes a counter-move to retain the status quo of our children's miseducation. There are people in the community who believe that the recently publicized, and many not so publicized, incidents of racism in O.P.S. are due, in large part, to the arrogance and racism manifested by the Superintendent,which sends the message to O.P.S. that racist policies and acts on their part are acceptable. Meanwhile, many students of color are openly hostile and apathetic about the content of schooling which has little apparent relevance to their lives and which ignores the contributions made by their respective national groups. The district, in turn, arrogantly and/or naively, expects students to sit through the injustice of forced ignorance.

Today the cadre of multi-culture education advocates are still fighting the district to make changes because, among other things, students of color are still being disproportionately shunted into vocational orientation courses and remedial programs. That this is the case should serve to warn us that some folks intend for us to continue to be the hewers of wood and drawers of water for those well-educated others.

-Montsho Rakeletso is an American-born African social worker who is actively involved in efforts to bring multi-culture education into O.P.S. curricula.